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following Stubbs too closely. The great illusion of Stubbs, as Petit-Dutaillis and Maitland have shown, was fetish-worship of the English constitution.

As a whole the second volume of the *Genesis of Lancaster*, which deals almost altogether with the domestic history of England to the fall of the Plantagenet house, is superior to the first. A large portion of it is taken up with the revolt of 1381 where Réville, Powell, Oman, and Trevelyan seem to be faithfully followed. But the reluctant judgment of the reviewer is that the work fails of being a completely trustworthy and "up-to-date" history of the period in question. The maps and press-work are excellent, but more careful proof-reading would have eliminated variant spellings, *e. g.*, Arragon and Aragon.

JAMES WESTFALL THOMPSON.

The History of the Grain Trade in France, 1400-1710. By ABBOTT PAYSON USHER, Ph.D. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1913. Pp. xv, 405.)

THIS volume is in every way in keeping with the character of the series of which it is a part. It is thorough and scholarly, is based on minute and extensive research in the manuscript records and, while not always indicating as complete an assimilation of the material as might be wished, there is ample evidence that the author has a good grasp of his subject. This does not, however, prevent the book from being difficult and dry. Indeed the overcrowding of detail not infrequently destroys the interest by obscuring the place of the grain trade in the general conditions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. There is not enough feeling for its relation to the life of France and of Europe during these centuries. On the other hand the work satisfies to an unusual degree an essential requirement of all monographs in that it is a thorough study of an important phase of a large and important subject, and is therefore a very material contribution to economic history. As the title indicates, the author limits himself to the movement of grain within France; a commendable departure from the over-ambitious aspirations of many writers in the field who like Araskhaniantz are misled into taking the foreign trade also, with the inevitable result of getting overwhelmed by the mass of material to be controlled. Similarly, by concluding with 1709, a degree of unity is secured which would inevitably have been sacrificed if the eighteenth century had been included. The story of the grain trade of that century is more dramatic, it is true, but it is also marked by changes and the operation of new forces, especially that of the physiocrats and their struggle for freedom of trade.

The work is divided into two parts. The first treats in separate chapters: markets and market organization; areas of highly localized markets and misery entailed through dearth of supply; the history of

the Parisian markets; the trade of the Rhone Valley, the producing areas of Burgundy, Languedoc, and Province, as it is reflected at Lyons.

The second part deals with the regulation of the grain trade in France by national and local authorities during three successive periods; from 1500 to 1660; from 1660 to 1683, or the years of Colbert, and from 1683 to 1709. By way of conclusion there is a chapter on theories and policies that brings out clearly the influence of the concepts of the time upon the material conditions. The chapter is entitled Conclusion, but a more descriptive and more adequate title might properly have been found. The critical apparatus which covers the last twenty pages of the volume is all that could be desired, including a table of French dry measures of the period, a glossary of administrative terms, a critical and descriptive study both of manuscript and printed sources, and an index.

From this summary of the content of the book, a number of facts appear. The actual areas in which Dr. Usher studied the grain trade with microscopic effort are those of Paris or the middle Seine basin and those of Lyons and the Rhone Valley. Accounts of other regions occur but it is in the two areas just mentioned that thorough investigating is done. For the other areas the author is content with a survey of the material, a phase of which appears in an illuminating map showing routes, grain-trade areas and their relation to the centres of population from 1660 to 1710. To the man accustomed to the centralized national state of to-day the most striking feature is the complete absence, in the movement of grain, of any national character. Royal edicts constantly assume this, reiterating the statements about the richness of France, but in actual life Dr. Usher shows how "the harmonious exchange of the blessings of heaven" did not exist. Instead it was blocked at every turn by provincial jealousies, the chicanery and opposition of officials, and inadequate means of communication within the realm. The problem throughout therefore is one of distribution within a local market area. Prices are determined neither by a world's demand as to-day, or for that matter by a national demand, but rather by the conditions prevailing in the local market systems. In times of shortage there was no relief and intense misery prevailed. Indeed during the later period a state of chronic distress was induced by the development of wholesale buying and storage for the supply of the cities.

That the author confined his detailed investigation to the records at Paris and Lyons is at first disappointing, but when one considers the mass of material, its dry and complicated character, it is evident that the plan adopted was calculated to afford more satisfactory and more scholarly results. Even as it is there is frequent evidence of a plethora of material too little digested, resulting, as in the case of the treatment of the *blatiers* (ch. I.), in frequent repetition of the same facts and ideas in slightly different form. By way of contrast to the over-emphasis here and there is the striking fact that price statistics are neglected and

the *Conseil de Commerce* though mentioned is apparently not thought of sufficient importance to receive further notice.

Cesare Borgia: a Biography. By WILLIAM HARRISON WOODWARD.
(London: Chapman and Hall. 1913. Pp. ix, 477.)

It is astonishing, in view of the extensive literature upon the Borgia family, that any one should feel encouraged to add thereto, and it is more astonishing still that the effort should lead to such a volume as the present, embodying results which unhesitatingly recommend themselves as worth the exacting labor. These results indeed are largely a matter of shades, for the historic figure of Cesare as well as those of Alexander and Lucrezia have been so closely studied within the last twenty years that they stand revealed to us in their essential lines, but the fact is certain that the reputation of the Borgias when living suffered extraordinarily at the hands of malicious gossips and when dead was inflated to mythological proportions by indignant moralists and lively rhetoricians. The professional student may feel some justifiable elation that the effect of each new scholarly attack upon the Borgia legend has been to pare down some excrescences and to that general rule the present book is no exception. The author is not a member of the honorable order of genial whitewashers but a diligent and sober investigator whose close attention to evidence coupled with the strict elimination of rumor has enabled him to tone down in some noticeable respects the received idea of the red-handed Borgias. It is for this reason that his achievement may be called an affair of shades, and this is the reason, too, why Cesare, without becoming white, loses much of that unrelieved blackness with which his qualities were inked in by earlier biographers. A human and intelligible Cesare—who does not welcome him in the place of the nursery bugaboo whose face has been distorted till it is no better than a carnival mask? Without pleading, by a cool and rather colorless presentation of evidence, Mr. Woodward has disposed of many charges which have been laid at the door of the Borgias: for instance, it will hardly be possible any longer to declare that Cesare murdered his brother Gandia, and the overworked tale that Alexander died and Cesare just failed to die from poison intended for another will have to vanish from the text-books that preach the corruption of the papacy. No crime that Cesare authentically committed is glossed over, and, I hurry to add, in order to forestall disappointment, the catalogue of misdeeds which remains is still impressive. And what is the upshot? Instead of committing murder from blood-lust or like a highwayman in order to strip a wretched victim of his shirt, Cesare emerges more clearly than ever as a really serious political figure who, guided by the rules of conduct dominant in the Italy of his day, fixed his eyes upon a goal and steadily marched toward it regardless of the objects heaped in his path. The political audacity and clear-sightedness, the military skill